

EAPS IN A MANAGED CARE ENVIRONMENT

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DEFINITION OF EAP

An employee assistance program (EAP) is a professional assessment and referral program and a short term counseling service offered to employees with alcohol or drug or emotional problems that may be affecting job performance.



ACCESS TO EAP

- ❖ Employees may self-refer to the EAP or be referred by a supervisor.
- ❖ Referrals by supervisors are very likely to involve an employee substance abuse problem.





DIRECTION OF EAP TODAY

- ❖ The EAP historical roots were established in alcoholism and now there is a renewed interest in EAP services to provide substance abuse counseling because of the Federally-directed and regulated drug-free workplace programs.
 - ❖ Over the past 8 years there has been a trend toward combining under managed behavioral health care services.
 - ❖ EAPS, however, are also aging independently and have survived by advocating for clients to receive necessary services.
 - ❖ Human resource services umbrella expanded to include referrals other than health services, i.e., child care, elder care, legal, financial assistance, etc.
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CHANGES IN EAP UNDER MANAGED CARE

- ❖ As treatment services were cut back, cases ricocheted into the EAP and EAP has become the in-house HMO providing mental health services.
 - ❖ EAPs now seeing serious cases that would ordinarily be referred out and handled by mental health services, i.e., violence, sexual abuse, incest, eating disorders, and severe substance abuse.
 - ❖ This change in limited access to mental health services has implications for training of EAP professionals.
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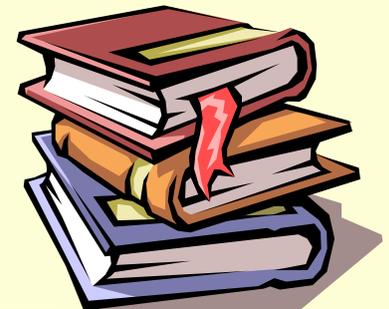


EAP -- ROLE DEFINITION

- ❖ When the EAP staff member provides substance abuse counseling as a trained Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), the perception of confidentiality in the counseling role can be confusing to the employee who also encounters the person in the EAP service role, i.e, financial services.
 - ❖ Separating the two functions of SAP and EAP is desirable, but not always feasible in the workplace.
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TRAINING IMPLICATIONS FOR EAP

- ❖ Currently the accrediting body for schools of social work still does not require substance abuse to be taught in any way as part of the required curriculum.
- ❖ This is also true for schools of psychology and other professional schools.
- ❖ Advocacy is needed to push training in substance abuse for these professionals, especially in changes with managed care.





HUMAN RESOURCES AND EAP

- ❖ With the expansion of ancillary services available through the EAP, companies frequently contract out these services as pass-through activities.
 - ❖ Requests for legal services, generally for divorces, frequently involve a marriage partner with substance abuse problems. There should be more referrals back to EAPs from these new services.
 - ❖ Who monitors the carve-out services? It is important these be reviewed by the EAP for quality assurance.
 - ❖ With these new services, who is doing intakes to determine if substance abuse problems exist and what assistance could be provided?
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EAP AND WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- ❖ When employers address the issue of prevention of workplace violence, the link between substance abuse and the violence is frequently unexplored.
 - ❖ The EAP professional staff, whether available through in-house or carve out services, need to be involved in planning to address these issues.
 - ❖ The substance abuse field needs to take a more active role in addressing violence in the workplace.
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EAP AND TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS

New trends for EAP service delivery:

- ❖ Chat rooms
- ❖ Information services on-line
- ❖ Provider lists accessible on-line through passwords
- ❖ Coaching sessions
- ❖ Counseling sessions – in real time



EAP AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Council on Accreditation and the Employee Assistance Society of North America are partnering in the development of guidelines and standards to be used in accrediting EAP programs. This collaboration is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.





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